

Week of March 24, 2003: MDOT Flash Facts

Topic: Frost Heaves

Monday:

Opener:

It's that time of year when Mother Nature tells drivers to slow down by providing plenty of frost heaves in the roads. Should this change the way you drive? More after the break.

Flash Facts:

The MaineDOT wants you to drive safely and this time of year they have Mother Nature to back them up. Frost heaves are natural speed bumps and this year's crop promises to be one of the worst.

- The long frigid winter has driven frost very deep -- this means more and bigger frost heaves.
- Hitting a bump or swerving to avoid it can lead to loss of vehicle control - especially on curves.
- Crashes where drivers run off the road account for more than 40% of traffic fatalities in Maine.

Be a Road Model: Slow down and watch for frost heaves.

Wednesday:

Opener:

We know that spring is on the way when frost heaves start to appear on Maine roads. Are frost heaves a safety hazard? More after the break.

Flash Facts

Frost heaves are a sure sign of spring in Maine. The MaineDOT wants you to know that this year is especially bad for frost heaves, so please drive cautiously.

- Watch for frost heaves and slow down to maintain vehicle control.
- The season has just begun - as the freeze and thaw pattern becomes more extreme, the bumps will get worse.
- If you see a frost heave sign, you're coming up on a bad one. But the MaineDOT can't mark them all, so drive with caution.

Be a Road Model: drive slowly over frost heaves.

Friday:**Opener:**

Spring is in the air and frost heaves are on the roads. This year, they are particularly large. Many miles of secondary roads do not currently meet modern design standards, so frost heaves tend to be worst on these roads, but this year even the Interstate and other major roads are experiencing large frost heaves, so watch for them on all roads. More after the break.

Flash Facts

We all know that hitting a frost heave can damage your car, but did you know they can also make driving more dangerous? This is a particularly bad year for frost heaves because of the long cold winter. The worst frost heaves are on secondary roads, and the MaineDOT says these roads typically have higher crash rates than highways. During frost heave season, please:

- Slow down on roads where frost heaves are bad.
- Be especially careful on curves - hitting a frost heave at speed can cause loss of control.
- Drive moderately and brake well in advance so drivers behind you can react – otherwise you could get struck from behind.
- Stay in your lane at all times.

Be a Road Model: drive with caution during frost heave season.